AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original) A flare stopper to be installed in a lens barrel for holding a taking lens, an inner periphery for defining a circular opening to pass incident light upon said taking lens being formed in said flare stopper, said inner periphery having the form of a side face of a circular truncated cone.

2. (original) A flare stopper as recited in claim 1, wherein said flare stopper is made of a phosphor bronze plate by sheet metal stamping.

3. (original) A flare stopper as recited in claim 2, wherein the thickness of said phosphor bronze plate is approximately 0.03 mm.

4. (original) A flare stopper as recited in claim 1, wherein said flare stopper is made of Mylar (trade name) by sheet metal stamping.

5. (original) A flare stopper as recited in claim 4, wherein the thickness of said Mylar is approximately 0.03 to 0.05 mm.

6. (original) A taking lens unit comprising:

a lens barrel;

plural lens elements contained in said lens barrel; and

a flare stopper disposed between said lens elements, wherein an inner periphery for defining a circular opening to pass incident light upon said taking lens unit is formed, and said inner periphery is inclined with respect to an optical axis of said taking lens unit.

7. (original) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 6, further comprising:

a spacer disposed between said lens elements, wherein said flare stopper in said taking lens unit is attached to said spacer.

8. (original) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 6, wherein said flare stopper is made of a phosphor bronze plate by sheet metal stamping.

9. (original) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 8, wherein the thickness of said phosphor bronze plate is approximately 0.03 mm.

10. (original) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 6, wherein said flare stopper is made of Mylar (trade name) by sheet metal stamping.

11. (original) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 10, wherein the thickness of said Mylar is approximately 0.03 to 0.05 mm.

12. (currently amended) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 10, wherein one of said lens elements ~~element~~ presses and deforms said flare stopper so that said inner periphery is inclined with respect to said optical axis of said taking lens unit.

13. (currently amended) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 6, wherein said flare stopper is nipped and held between a first of said lens elements ~~element~~ and ~~said~~ a spacer, the spacer being arranged between the first lens element and another of the lens elements.

14. (new) A taking lens unit comprising:

a lens barrel;

a plurality of lens elements disposed within the lens barrel; and

a flare stopper disposed between a first and second of the plurality of lens elements;

wherein the flare stopper defines a circular opening; and

wherein the flare stopper comprises a first portion defining the circular opening, the first portion having a surface that defines a side surface of a frustocone.

15. (new) The taking lens unit of claim 14, wherein the flare stopper further comprises a generally planar second portion surrounding the first portion.

16. (new) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 15, wherein said flare stopper is made of a phosphor bronze plate by sheet metal stamping.

17. (new) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 16, wherein the thickness of said phosphor bronze plate is approximately 0.03 mm.

18. (new) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 14, wherein said flare stopper is in contact with and deflected by one of the plurality of lens elements.

19. (new) The taking lens unit of claim 14, wherein the frustoconical shape defined by first portion has its smaller diameter facing an objective end of the taking lens.

20. (new) The taking lens of claim 14, wherein the frustoconical shape defined by first portion has its smaller diameter facing an end opposite the objective end of the taking lens.